

OFFICE OF QUALITY PROFESSIONALS AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
August 16-17, 2007

EDUCATOR LICENSURE

18. Approval for the Passing Score for the School Leadership Licensure Assessment (SLLA) Exam as Recommended by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure Development. (Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with no public comment).

Specifications:

On May 4, 2007, the Certification Commission voted to raise the cut score for the School Leadership Licensure Assessment (SLLA) exam from 154 to 165.

Background:

The SLLA is based on Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. It is designed to measure whether entry-level principals and other school leaders have the relevant knowledge believed necessary for competent professional practice. (ETS 2005)

The SLLA test is a six hour test consisting of three two hour modules. The first module contains two separate one-hour sections. Both of these sections are formatted in vignettes that require the test taker to answer with specific detail and then give a rationale for the answer when appropriate. Section I covers the content areas such as due processes, exceptional education, safety, facilities, budget, discipline, technology, and scheduling. Section II requires the test taker to balance the budget, address instructional and curriculum issues, relate strategies used in response to a given situation, and discuss the instructional implications. (ETS 2005)

The second module consists of two separate two-hour sessions. The first session involves content that requires synthesis of information and problem solving as the test taker reacts to case studies. The second session covers document analysis in which the test taker uses his/her results to utilize decision making skills. (ETS 2005)

Rationale:

A panel of certified Administrators and Educational Leadership personnel met on March 20, 2007, to evaluate the currently approved passing score for the School Leadership Licensure Assessment test (SLLA) that is required for Administrators to be certified. The current passing score of 154 has allowed 98% of all test takers to pass. The average score made by most Mississippi SLLA test takers is much higher, whether traditional or alternate route. When looking at the scores of the same test takers grouping by gender and ethnicity all SLLA test takers during this same time period had a median score range from 173 to 180. The panel is recommending that the Commission raise the passing score on the SLLA to 165. For the testing period of September 1, 2005 - August 31, 2006, a cut score of 165 would have resulted in 86.3% of Mississippi test takers passing the SLLA.

This test is only given in the months of January, September, and June of each year. The next available date for an individual to take this test is June 09, 2007. If the new score is approved, this policy must be in place by August 1, 2007 due to administrative licensure applications arriving in the Office of Educator Licensure for the upcoming school year. This will put in place a historical timeline by which the SLLA will require the cut score of 165.

The report from the SLLA review panel and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) data on state test scores is attached.

Backup Material: Attached

Recommendation: Approval

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| <p>MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI MARCH 20, 2007</p> |
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Participants

Mississippi Score Setting Study (SSS) School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) Panelists

Gerald Hasselman, Director of Educational Leadership, Mississippi College,
William Heller, Principal, Saint Joseph Catholic High School
Gloria Lewis-Washington, Principal, Linwood Elementary
Dr. Doris Smith, Professor, Mississippi College
Pamela Felder, Educational Consultant, JBHM Education Group

Mississippi Department of Education Staff

Cindy Coon, Director of Educator Licensure
Cindy Chester, Special Projects Officer

ETS Staff

Katherine Bassett, Director, Client Relations, Praxis
Cory Murphy, Director, Client Relations, Praxis

PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this meeting was to review state specific data generated for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment used for licensing teachers and administrators in the state of Mississippi respectively. This was done in an effort to yield a recommended passing score for final approval by the Mississippi State Board of Education. Prior to the score review, panelists were presented a brief overview of the test development process. This was completed to provide the attendees with background information as to how we had arrived at the role that they were called together to play in the test adoption process. Discussion of the two tests reviewed is available in the subsequent sections below.

MEETING PROCEDURE

SLLA Panel

- 1:00 Welcome and Introductions
- 1:30 Overview of Steps to Test Development and State Adoption Process
- 2:15 Distribution, Review, and Discussion of Score Setting Study Materials
- 4:00 Adjourn

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Discussion and Recommendations

School Leaders Licensure Assessment (Recommended Score: 165)

The panelists began the discussion by stating they are very unhappy with ETS for placing an assistant principal on the SLLA revision panel instead of a higher education representative. The panelists reminded the ETS staff that Mississippi had been an integral part of the original SLLA development team. The panel, which consisted of primarily higher education representatives, stated that they did not feel that the state was adequately represented by an assistant principal from an urban school district.

Mr. Murphy reminded the panel that while in the position of Bureau Chief for the Mississippi Licensure and Certification office, he had personally reached out to each and every Institution of Higher Education preparing school administrators to request recommendations for the ETS development team. Not receiving recommendation, Mr. Murphy then reached out to school districts. He forwarded all recommendations to ETS.

Ms. Bassett described the criteria that ETS uses to empanel a National Advisory Committee, stating that ETS must have representation from higher education, practitioners at each developmental level, race, gender, and school setting. She also asked the panel if they would like an ETS representative to present at their next Deans meeting to provide an overview of the revision process to date. She also stated that she would find out if there will be an item writing team for the SLLA; if there is, Mississippi will have a higher education representative on that panel.

The panel stated that they would like an update and would appreciate representation on the item writing panel. They also expressed appreciation for the opportunity to air their dissatisfaction.

Attention then turned to the process of revisiting the SLLA score. The panel stated that the current score is set too low based upon the high pass rate for the state in this area. Also noted was that the state must raise the bar for excellence and refrain from settling for mediocrity. Leadership is a key factor in the success of the K-12 educational system. Panelists indicated that a higher score would assist in weeding out those candidates who are not properly prepared to serve in the role of an effective instructional leader.

The panelists reviewed and discussed the SLLA TAAG, test information sheets, three year rolling data and state specific data. The recommended score yielded from the state specific

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attending institutional data was 165. This score was the consensus of the group. The panelists arrived at this conclusion noting the following justification:

- Currently, the state specific attending institutional data indicates that if the score is set at 165, it would yield an 87% passage rate;
 - The state review the score within one year and raise it if necessary;
 - State specific data indicates that a majority of all candidates prepared in state would successfully challenge exam at recommended score;
 - Increasing score would cause administrator preparation program providers to strengthen their admission criteria.
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Next Steps

- The reports from all score setting studies with recommendations will be forwarded to the Mississippi Department of Education personnel to undergo their score adoption protocol.
- After receiving final approval by the state board of education, test adoption forms will be forwarded to and completed by the state department.
- Ms. Bassett has informed Ms. Florence Cucchi, who is coordinating the SLLA revision process for the Client Relations team, of the concerns of this panel. Ms. Cucchi will ascertain whether or not an item writing panel will be used for SLLA. She will also provide Mr. Murphy with a PowerPoint presentation to use as the basis for a presentation at the Dean's meeting to update the Deans on the revision work on the SLLA.

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